

REFLECTIONS ON THE *NARRINAI* VOCABULARY

In his work *Tamil Literature*, Handbuch der Orientalistik, Leiden/Köln, 1975, p. 89, K. Zvelebil writes: « *Narrinai*, "The excellent love situations", traditionally mentioned as first among the Eight¹, is an anthology of 400 poems in the *akaval* metre ascribed to 175 poets, ranging from 8 to 13 lines (plus an invocation by Peruntēvaṇār). Song 234 is missing..., 385 is fragmentary. No ancient commentary is available. There is a good modern commentary by P. A. Nārāyaṇacāmi Aiyar (1862-1914). The topic of the poems is *aintinai*, or the five appropriate love situations. The anthology contains 59 historical allusions. Quite a number of lines reappear in later texts (*TK*, *Cil.*, *Maṇ.*). The allusion to the legend of a woman who tore off her breast (Kaṇṇaki?) occurs in *Nar.* 216, and its echo probably in *Nar.* 312. There are not many Aryan loan words in the anthology ». It is dated A.D. 100-250 by the same author *ibid.*, p. 78, and thus belongs to the oldest works of classical Tamil literature.

Zvelebil's description, short and to the point as it is, may well serve as an introduction to the work the vocabulary of which will be treated here; the language of *Narrinai* is undoubtedly Old Tamil. In stating that « there are not many Aryan loan words in the anthology » Zvelebil follows an established tradition among scholars: in old Tamil literature the number of pure Dravidian words are relatively much greater than in later works, and *Narrinai* being one of the oldest works extant in Tamil literature could reasonably be expected to prove the fact. The expression « not many » is of course rather vague, and the issue may be left at the moment: it is to be hoped that it will be possible to define this more clearly after the vocabulary has been thoroughly investigated. While Zvelebil uses the term « Aryan loan words », I would suggest that the present investigation comprise Indo-Aryan and/or Indo-

1. I.e. *Eṭṭutokai*.

European (IA/IE) « loanwords » and/or « Gemeingut » in accordance with the terminology earlier used by me².

It is well known that in WINSLOW's and FABRICIUS' lexicon both authors use an asterisk in front of words which they regard as « loanwords » from Skt. Tamil Lexicon also does, up to vol. I, p. 506, but after that it only gives the Skt. word thought to be the origin of the word in question. This is also done by Winslow, often with a reference to WILSON's Sanskrit dictionary.

Even if we confine ourselves to words marked with an asterisk in the dictionaries mentioned, i.e. words presumably of Skt. origin and thus IA and often IE, we find in *Narṛinai* a number of words which could be designated — if not all as « Aryan loan words » — at least as « Gemeingut ». Cf. e.g. *Narṛinai* 1³.

ninra collar nītutōṇ ṛiṇiyar
enrum enrōḷ piripariyalarē
tāmarait taṇṭā tūti mīmicaic
cāntiṇ toṭutta tīntēṇ pōlap
puraiya maṇra puraiyōr kēnmai
nīriṇ ramaiyā vulakam pōlat
tammiṇ ramaiyā nannayan taruḷi
narunutal pacatta laṇcic
cirumai urupavō ceypari yalarē

In rough translation this means:

He is a man of standing words / a man of sweet manners shown for a long time / he would not know of ever parting from my arms. / Like the sweet honey formed on a sandal tree above after the cool pollen of the lotus has blown / so is the friendship of a man of high qualities certainly appropriate. / As the world does not endure being without water / so also I could not bear to be without him. / Graciously loving me he would fear the changing colour of my fragrant forehead. / Would he undertake a meanness as one who does not know what to do⁴?

Of the words appearing in this stanza the following are marked in WINSLOW and FABRICIUS with an asterisk: 1:3, *tāmarai* « lotus », 1:3, *tātu* « pollen », 1:6, *nīr* « water », and 1:6, *ulakam* « world ».

2. RUTH WALLDÉN, *Hidden Indo-European and/or Indo-Aryan « Loanwords » in Old Tamil?*, I and II, in « *Orientalia Suecana* », vols. XXVII-XXVIII, Uppsala, 1978-79 and 1980, to which I refer for reference works quoted, abbreviations used, terminology etc. (Loanwords I and II).

3. The edition here used is *Narṛinai nāṇūru*. Kaḷaka veḷiyiṭu 614, South India Saiva Siddhanta Works Publishing Society, Tinnevely, Ltd., ed. 4, Cennai, 1967.

4. I am well aware of the fact that Dr. A. Kamatchinathan of Annamalai university, Chidambaram, has made a translation and a complete index of *Narṛinai*, constituting his so far unpublished doctoral thesis. In spite of every possible effort — including correspondence as well as personal visits to the author and universities and institutes involved — it has not been possible to obtain a copy of this work, which would naturally have been of great value.

In DED *tāmarai* is treated under no. 2583, where Skt. *tāmarasa* is referred to for comparison. EWA says: « Wohl dravidisch », with a reference i.a. to T. Burrow, Transactions of the Philological Society, London (1946), 1947, p. 9, where other references are found in a note, all giving the same opinion.

Tātu, 1:3, marked with an asterisk both in WINSLOW and in FABRICIUS, has a reference to Skt. *dhātu* both in WINSLOW and in TL. It is, however, found without a reference to Skt. in DED under no. 2579 which means, as we know, that it is regarded by the authors as a Dravidian word⁵. Skt. *dhātu* when derived from Skt. *dhā-* is considered to be an IA/IE word, cf. EWA, DIAL no. 6773, and WP I, p. 826.

Whether this derivation holds for the meaning of *tātu* in this stanza and its possible equivalent Skt. *dhātu* is uncertain. Phonetically there is a perfectly regular correspondence between the two words. Semantically too there are many obvious correspondences — cf. MW and TL. In this stanza *tātu* probably means « pollen » from the lotus flower. Although the literal meaning « pollen » could not be found in the Skt. dictionaries nor in DIAL or in PED, in my opinion it could by no means be ruled out that Skt. *dhātu* in this case as in many other cases, e.g. in the meaning « semen », is equivalent to Ta. *tātu*.

Our third item, *nīr*, « water », is also found in DED under no. 3057. There is a reference to Skt. *nīra-* « water » and *nīvara-* id. EWA after a lengthy discussion arrives at this conclusion: « Ein früh erkanntes LW aus dem Dravidischen... »⁶. DIAL n. 7552, holds the same view but also shows correspondences in several NIA languages.

Ulakam, our fourth item marked with an asterisk in WINSLOW and FABRICIUS, is a borrowing from IA/IE, according to most authorities, cf. e.g. EWA under *ulokaḥ* and *lokaḥ* with references and discussion⁷. As could be expected the word is not found in DED, i.e. it is considered to be of IA and/or IE origin.

The word *cāntu*, « sandal », 1:4, is not marked in WINSLOW or FABRICIUS, but in WINSLOW *cantanam* with identical meaning is marked and has a reference to WILSON *chandanam*. *Cāntu* is found in DED under no. 2021 with the reference: « Cf. Skt. *candana-* sandal (tree, wood, paste) ». Discussing this item EWA says: « ...wohl dravidischen Ursprungs... ». According to DIAL *candana-* « sandalwood » is found already in Nirukta and later on in MIA in different dialects⁸.

5. According to DED the word is found in Tamil and in Toda.

6. In NA. TEVANEYAN, *Vaṭamoḷi varalāru*, Ceṇṇai (1902), 1967, p. 190, *nīr*, *nīram* is connected with *īr*. This word, like *īram*, has the meaning « moisture » among others. Cf. also DED 3057 and K. ZVELEBIL, *Comparative Dravidian Phonology*, The Hague-Paris, 1970, pp. 132-33.

7. Cf. also S. VAIDYANATHAN, *Indo-Aryan Loanwords in Old Tamil*, Madras, 1971, p. 80.

8. Cf. T. BURROW, *op. cit.*, p. 14, with discussion and note.

So far we have discussed words marked with an asterisk in certain dictionaries, indicating their Skt. origin according to the compilers. Of the five items discussed all may safely be considered as early « Gemeingut » in Indian literature, while there may be differences of opinion concerning their ultimate origin.

A few other words might be taken up for consideration. The word *manṛa*, 1:5, here means « certainly ». TL designates it as an adverb « perh. *manṇu* », with the meanings 1) clearly, 2) certainly, 3) abundantly; it could also be an expletive. *Manṛam*, to which is also added the remark « perh. *manṇu* », has, under its meaning no. 12 « certainty », a reference to *manṛa*.

The verb *manṇu*, thus referred to, has a variety of meanings, e.g. « to be permanent; to endure », « to remain long; to stay », « to be steady », « to abound »; the verbal noun *manṇal* meaning e.g. « permanence, stability, steadiness », « strength », « greatness »^{9 10}.

The only meaning that *manṛa* and *manṇu* have in common seems to be meaning no. 6 of the latter in TL, viz. « to abound », a meaning which, however, does not belong to the item under discussion.

Skt. *man-* has in MW only one meaning in common with TL *manṇu*, viz. the meaning « to agree ». It does not become clear in TL whether this « to agree » is equivalent with « be of opinion »; the material is too scanty here. MW is more elaborate on this point, and there are translations given like « methinks » etc. which could doubtless lead our thoughts in the direction of our item *manṛa*; Skt. *manye*, e.g. corresponds to Pa. *manne*, which see in PED where it is said that it « is used like an adv. as affirmative particle... meaning: methinks, for certain, surely, indeed ». The IA items mentioned could both be referred to IE *men-*, cf. WP II, p. 264, and although the IA *forms* quoted could not possibly correspond, phonetically, to our Ta. item *manṛa*, in all probability the IA/IE root *men-/man-* lies at the bottom of the Ta. word.

In connection with the meanings « to be permanent, to stay » etc., « permanence, stability » etc. of Ta. *manṇu* and *manṇal* respectively I would like to mention Ta. *manṛam* « open space, place, hall » etc. *manṛam* with this meaning is not found in the first stanza of *Narṛinai* but

9. *Maṇ*¹ is in TL given as an affix indicative of i.a. « greatness, abundance », « permanence », and *maṇ*², which is presented as derived from *manṇu*, has as its meaning no. 6 « greatness ». Cf. WP II, pp. 268-69, and EWA *maṇhate*, *magham* with discussion and references.

10. Cf. also E. SCHWYZER, *Griechische Grammatik...* (Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft), II, 1, 2, München, 1950, pp. 569-70, on μέν, μᾶ, μᾶν (att. μῆν), STUART JONES & MC KENZIE, *Greek-English Lexicon*, Liddell & Scott, Oxford, 1977, under μέν, HJ. FRISK, *op. cit.*, under μῆν, EWA under *sma* and WP II, p. 685. This may perhaps give another solution to the problem, but the IA/IE connection would remain.

does occur in 33:3 and in other places; the frequency of *maṇṇa* « surely » etc. and *maṇṇam* « place » etc. is about the same ¹¹.

Maṇṇam is found in DED under no. 3913, *maṇṇu*, where it is shown to exist not only in Ta. but in many other Dravidian languages as well. No reference is made to Skt. *mandira-* which has a number of meanings in common with Ta. *maṇṇam* — vide MW and TL — and which could also phonetically well correspond to Ta. *maṇṇam*.

In the discussion on *mandiram* and its possible IE connections EWA says «... Andererseits wird für die ai. Wörter *mandiras* und *mandurā* eine dravidische Deutung vorgeschlagen (Burrow, BSOAS, 12, 389); ... ».

DIAL, finally, informs us, under no. 9852, about the appearance of *mandiram* in MBh. and in some IA languages. Reference is here made to Skt. *mand-* « to tarry, stand still, pause » which, according to MW, is found in RV.

Should the Dravidian word be the origin of Skt. *mandiram* we have the rather unusual phenomenon of Skt. using an epenthetic vowel, in spite of the fact that Skt. is a language where a medial consonant cluster *-ndr-*, *ntr-* is a perfectly normal feature. A medial cluster of that type in a Skt. word, on the other hand, demands an epenthetic vowel when borrowed into Ta.; this is the normal procedure, cf. e.g. *chandra-cantiraṇ*, *mantra-* *mantiram*. I therefore find it more plausible that a Skt. word *mandira-*, n., where the accent lies on the last syllable and where the *i* lacks length and accent, has become Ta. *maṇṇam*.

In TL *maṇṇam* and *maṇṇu* have most of their meanings in common; besides those already mentioned also « cow-shed », « cow-stall »; *maṇṇu* also means « herd of cows ». Cf. Frisk, Hj., *Griechisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch*, Heidelberg, 1954-60, under *μᾶνδρα* « Pferch, Hürde, Stall », where he suggests the possibility of its being a loanword « aus gemeinsamer (Kleinasiatischer?) Quelle... ». He mentions, but does not favour, the connection with IE *mand-* « Rutenverflechtung als Hürde... » suggested in WP II, p. 234, where the authors, in their turn, reject a connection with IE *men-*, Skt. *man-* « bleiben, stillestehen », vide WP II, p. 267.

However, in the cases of *maṇṇa* « surely » etc. and *maṇṇam* « hall, open place, cow-shed » etc. it seems perfectly possible to associate both words with IE *men-*, Greek *μεν-*, Skt. *man-*, whatever the underlying connections may be.

Añci « having feared », 1: 8, is found in DED under no. 51, Ta. *añcu* « to fear, dread », n. « fear ». Here we can see how in different Dravidian languages this item appears with or without a nasal; in Ta. *añci*, *accu* and *accam* all mean « fear, dread, terror ».

11. *Maṇṇa* is found in 1:5, 34:11, 114:6, 183:6, 226:7, 286:4 according to IMLTA and my own annotations; *maṇṇam* in 33:3, 49:8, 73:4, 80:1, 293:3, 338:8, 346:5 and 365:2 according to PPI and my own annotations (49:8 and 80:1 are lacking in IMLTA).

In Skt. too we can observe a certain vacillation between nasal+guttural, nasal+palatal and a lack of nasal under similar conditions: *ac- añc-* « to move », also « to bend, make curved »; *añk- añc-* « to move in curve, curve »; *añgh-, aṇh-* and *aṇg-* « to go »; *aṇh-* with a reference to *añgh-*, and *aṇg-* with a reference to *ag-* and, in the meaning « to mark » with a reference to *añk*, cf. MW^{12 13}.

In DIAL this vacillation between e.g. *añk-* and *añc-* with or without nasalization could be seen e.g. under items nos. 100 ff.

In Ta. *añcam* is ~Skt. *haṁsa-* and Skt. *aṁśa-*; Ta. *añcali* is Skt. *añjali-*; Ta. *cañkai* is said to be ~ Skt. *jañghā-* < *jaṇh-*, cf. TL and WINSLOW. The last mentioned derivation could be claimed also for Ta. *añcal*, cf. Ta. *añcar-kāraṇ* and Skt. *jañghā-kara-* « courier ».

TL gives an item *cañki*, there derived from Skt. *śaṅkā-*, meaning « to doubt, hesitate » found in Tēvāram (ca. 900 A.D.), also *cañkai* with the same derivation meaning « doubt, fear, terror », cf. DED under no. 1882 Ta. *cañku*, Telugu *jañku* « to fear, be afraid, hesitate ». These are no doubt *tatsamas* derived from the Skt. root *śaṅk-* with derivations and having identical meanings, cf. EWA and WP I, p. 461.

Now it may be difficult to decide whether the apparently older Ta. *añcu* and derivations could be derived from the same IE/IA root. An initial Skt. *ś* should become Ta. *c* or *Ø* according to Vaidyanathan¹⁴, and the vacillation between the consonants was illustrated above. Thus from a phonetic and semantic point of view this is by no means impossible^{15 16 17}.

The investigations here presented on the basis of one single poem point at 6 à 7 « Gemeingut » words out of a total of 40 words. There is, of course, nothing to guarantee that we have traced all of them. Even so the percentage is about 16.

No definite conclusions should be drawn from this, but a sample investigation of *Narṛinai* supports the suggestion that after a thorough examination which is now being made the description we have had so far of the OTa. vocabulary may have to be considerably changed.

12. Cf. also MW *śaṅc-* « to go », only in Lexicon.

13. Vide J. WACKERNAGEL, *Altindische Grammatik*, I, Göttingen, 1896, pp. 147 ff.

14. *Op. cit.*, p. 85.

15. Cf. DED no. 4371, Ta. *vāñku* « to bend », Telugu *vaṇgu*, *vancu* id., EWA under *añcati* and ZVELEBIL, *Comparative Dravidian Phonology*, The Hague, 1970, p. 169.

16. Ta. *añcu* « to fear, dread » is used with the dative, sometimes with the accusative; Skt. *śaṅk-* « to fear, dread » with the accusative.

17. There is also a possible derivation from IE *añgh-*, cf. WP I, p. 62, and EWA under *aṇhatiḥ* « anxiety », *aṇhaḥ* id. and *aṇhuḥ* « narrow ». Cf. also MW and DIAL. As a curiosity could be mentioned that we have in Tamil *añar* « fear » and *añcal* id., also *añar* « to be lazy » and *añcal* « laziness ».

ABBREVIATIONS

BSOAS	= Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies.
DED	= T. BURROW and M. B. EMENEAU, <i>A Dravidian Etymological Dictionary</i> , Oxford, 1961. Supplement, Oxford, 1968.
DIAL	= R. L. TURNER, <i>A Comparative Dictionary of the Indo-Aryan Languages</i> , London, 1962-66.
EWA	= M. MAYRHOFER, <i>Kurzgefasstes etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindischen</i> , I-III, Heidelberg, 1953-76.
FABRICIUS	= J. P. FABRICIUS, <i>Tamil and English Dictionary</i> (1897), Madurai, 1972.
IMLTA	= <i>Index des mots de la littérature tamoule ancienne</i> , Institut Français d'Indologie, Pondichéry, 1967-70.
MIA	= Middle Indo-Aryan.
MW	= M. MONIER-WILLIAMS, <i>A Sanskrit-English Dictionary</i> (1899), Oxford, 1956, 1960.
NIA	= New Indo-Aryan.
OTa	= Old Tamil.
PED	= T. W. RHYS DAVIDS and W. STEDE, <i>The Pali Text Society's Pali-English Dictionary</i> , London, 1947-49.
PPI	= N. SUBRAHMANTIAN, <i>Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index</i> , Madras, 1966.
Skt	= Sanskrit.
Ta	= Tamil.
TL	= <i>Tamil Lexicon</i> , I-VI, Madras, 1926-36. Supplement, Madras, 1938-39.
WILSON	= H. H. WILSON, <i>A Dictionary, Sanscrit and English</i> , Calcutta, 1819.
WINSLOW	= M. WINSLOW, <i>Tamil-English Dictionary</i> , Madras, 1862; Wiesbaden, 1977.
WP	= A. WALDE and J. POKORNY, <i>Vergleichendes Wörterbuch der Indo-germanischen Sprachen</i> , I-III, Berlin and Leipzig, 1927-32.